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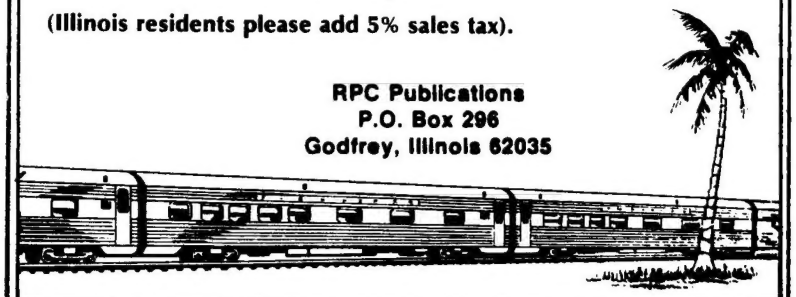

LETTERS

As a deputy member of the original Dallas City-County Amtrak Committee, I favor immediate action by Congress to split up Amtrak into physiographic or natural regions as independent operating entities. Obviously, this constitutes the only logical medium to provide equitable rail passenger service to all citizens residing in America.

The Southwest region should embrace Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. For almost a decade--dating from the inception of Amtrak--citizens in the respective geographical areas have witnessed these unprecedented specifics: Promises unfulfilled, utter indifference, rampant discrimination, flagrant violation of the law, and a "don't give a damn attitude" by Amtrak's Board of Directors. This elapsed time devoted to bureaucratic stupidity and inefficiency actually justifies secession from the union by Texas and her neighboring States.

Such a regional operating entity would confine its efforts to providing requisite service therein. Today, in contrast, Amtrak caters primarily to other segments of the nation. Furthermore, there is no logic in taxing citizens of Texas and the Southwest region to support Amtrak's operations designed only to favor citizens in the North and East.

Texas' representatives and senators--and also those whose constituents reside in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Oklahoma--should act now and provide a Southwest Amtrak Regional Operation. Otherwise, dictatorship from the north bank of the Potomac will remain as a permanent, paramount detriment to the Great Southwest.

Burt C. Blanton
Dallas, Texas

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ON THE COVER

The first westbound revenue run of Amtrak's new PENNSYLVANIAN prepares to leave Altoona PA on a wet and gray April 27. Note that the Altoona station is only a small trailer. Ken Maylath gave the full report on the first revenue runs in the last issue of RTN. Photo from a color transparency by Ken Maylath.

Congress is acquiescing in four illegally-running Amtrak trains that do not meet the objective and other criteria in the Amtrak Law, while other vital Amtrak trains get the ax--some illegally. Yet instead of holding the Northeast Corridor overbudgeting funds hostage to Amtrak legal compliance, the Congressional conference committee members--meeting on the bill for the Northeast and emerging corridors and the Rock Island--are ready to sell us short for thirty pieces of silver: for some Not-First-Priority emerging corridor futures.

Robert J. Swan
Long Beach, California

Hopefully this will serve as a final chapter to the much-discussed scenario involving the NARP Board at its meeting last October in Denver. The recent April meeting of the Board in Washington could have been explosive in the aftermath of that affair. Fortunately, it was not. It was, in fact, the best-attended and most informative meeting the group has ever experienced. A galaxy of interesting speakers made the event most worthwhile and the 2½ days devoted to the program removed the pressures that had existed previously. Good humor prevailed.

It is nothing new for a group to be subjected to internal controversy. If, however, the ultimate goals of an organization remain uppermost, oftentimes the organization emerges stronger than ever after the turmoil and debate are over.

I did not deviate from my original position that NARP's self-sovereignity should stand unmolested and that it should bow to no influences from the outside. From comments I received at the recent meeting I conclude that a substantial number of the directors concur with this concept. There were a few who agreed with the concept but may have disagreed with the straightforward exposure of the incident. Still fewer disagreed entirely but admitted that there was a lesson to be learned from the experience which all should profit from. I adhere to my belief that an issue such as this is best evaluated in full view of the constituency.

My recommendation that Amtrak employees who are members of the NARP Board be protected by a secluded voting process rather than by exclusion from the Board was recognized in the form of a resolution with no objections registered.

No doubt the incident will, as suggested by several correspondents, serve to lead NARP into a clear recognition of itself as an authoritative consumer advocacy association, one which establishes the highest possible standards and insists upon conformance to them without compromise. Advocacy of Amtrak and advocacy of rail passenger service are not necessarily one and the same, and the former must not be permitted to transcend the latter. Blind allegiance to the Amtrak

establishment is not the answer. We are interested in building a rail passenger system, not a bureaucracy. Results should be the bottom line.

Now--the future lies ahead. NARP membership has edged above 9000 and is headed for the long-sought 10,000 mark. Greater numbers will added strength and many challenges lie ahead where this strength will be needed. All advocates should choose an area and get involved. Membership, legislation, public relations, organizational activities--all are important to progress. NARP has acquired mass, momentum and maturity. The stage is set to move ahead.

M. D. Monaghan, Director, NARP Region IX
Garland, Texas

NEW ORLEANS TERMINAL IS REDEDICATED
by Adron Hall

On May 1, 1954, New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal (NOUPT) was christened with water from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Great Lakes, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio Rivers. Many of the 44 passenger train arrivals and departures at that time reached the shores of those bodies of water.

On May 3, 1980, the NOUPT was rededicated in ceremonies marking Amtrak's and New Orleanians' promises for more and better service for the traveling public from that facility.

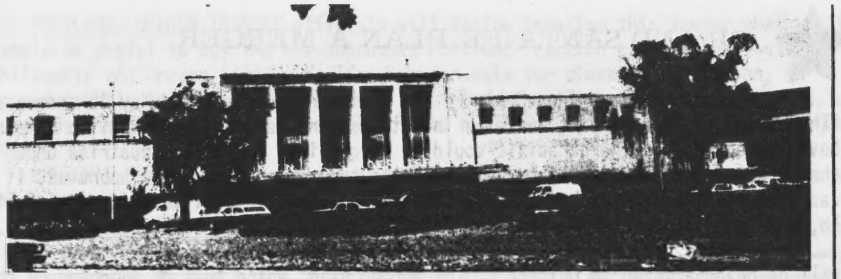
Present for the occasion was New Orleans Mayor Morial, councilman Singletary as master of ceremonies, Louisiana Representative Lindy Boggs, and from Amtrak, vice president-passenger services and communications M.L. Clark Tyler, vice president-public relations Carole Foryst, and several Amtrak headquarters personnel to keep the event rolling. Clark Tyler in his short speech did not have any significant announcements that local interests expected--e.g., a daily SUNSET LIMITED. However, in a later interview he said that daily operation for the SUNSET would come when the train is re-equipped with Superliner cars in 1981 or 1982. Also, when queried about Amtrak's great interest in NOUPT with only two daily trains and a tri-weekly train using the terminal, he cited a 22% increase in patronage here, the excellent cooperation Amtrak has received from the city in their use of the station, and the over 300 employees based here, many at the maintenance facility near the terminal.

The ceremony had begun 20 minutes late at 11:20am, awaiting the arrival of the Mayor. The PANAMA LIMITED also arrived at 11:20, 45 minutes late, with 130 extra passengers who had boarded at Hammond LA to come in for the event.

In his speech, Clark Tyler had alluded to a new alliance with intercity buses for intermodal transit, and cited NOUPT as an example, with Greyhound a joint occupant with Amtrak. During the afternoon open house, recorded announcements on the P.A. system of Greyhound departures were frequent, since they have about 40-50 departures per day. Interspersed with them was a spiel about the bus being the most fuel-efficient of all transportation modes.

Meanwhile at Tracks 3 and 4, Amtrak had a dazzling show of new and refurbished equipment, including Superliners, engines, and an SPV-2000. Balloons and popcorn were plentiful, and all Amtrak people were busy showing off their proud display. Clark Tyler even took his turn at blowing up balloons for the kids.

Inside the equipment, Amtrak on-board services personnel were available at every turn to be cordial, to assist and explain. In the dining cars a varity of foods from the menu had been prepared and placed on tables for prospective passengers to see what was available. Rooms in the sleeping car were exhibited as bedroom suites (with beds made down in one, up in another), roomettes (one with room service exemplified by a chef's salad on a table), and regular bedrooms shown for day or night service.



The New Orleans terminal, as pictured in a special Open House edition of Amtrak News, a four-page publication issued for the May 3-4 event.

On Track 3, P30 engine #709, and on Track 4, F40 #328 looked surprisingly huge with shiny noses rising handsomely above the bumper posts. The consist behind #709 was Amcoach 21889 (with refurbished interior), Amdinette 20225, SPV-2000, and SDP-40 #617 (in latest Amtrak paint scheme). F40 #328 was followed by three Superliners: coach 34076, diner 38011, and coach 34098; HEP sleeper 2894, diner 8501, and coach 4722; and Lehigh Valley #353--a private car.

TWO PANAMA LIMITED TRAINS DERAIL

Amtrak's northbound PANAMA LIMITED, train 58, derailed at a speed of about 85 mph one mile south of Humboldt IL at 9:10am on May 7. The two-engine, 12-car train derailed cars 3 thru 12 at milepost 164.4 on the ICG line, blocking the northbound main line. Fifty people were reported examined at hospitals, with 10 of them remaining for further treatment. Apparently there were no serious injuries. The escape without bad injuries was in part due to the train's landing in a soft, muddy ditch to the right side of the track. The train was deadheading back to Chicago some of the equipment displayed at the New Orleans Terminal open house (see article above). Consist of the derailed train was: engines 714 (P30) & 328 (F40) and cars 4722, 8501, 2894, 20225, 21889, 1215, 2885, 20236, 21838, 21815, 21241, and private car Lehigh Valley 353. The first five cars were deadheads. Sleeper 2894 suffered an estimated $800 damage, while those behind it had an estimated damage amount of $10,000 each. Some of the cars at the head of those derailing turned on their sides. Passengers were bused on, while the underailed two engines and first three cars continued nonstop to Chicago as deadheads, except that car 2894 was set out at Champaign. There was an estimated $15,000 damage to the track, and it was expected to be reopened about midnight following the accident. There was no reason immediately offered for the cause of the accident.

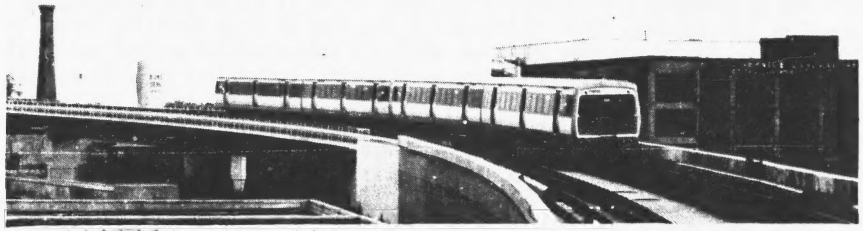
Five days later, on May 12, the northbound PANAMA LIMITED again derailed, this time at a speed of only about 5mph. At ICG milepost 154.3 in Galton IL at 10am, the train went thru a switch while moving from the southbound to the northbound track after passing an area of track work in progress. The train was 2½ hours late at the time. Two people were sent to a hospital with minor injuries. Amtrak engine 717 (a P30 engine) was pulling eight cars when cars 3 thru 5 derailed while going thru the crossover, blocking both northbound and southbound tracks. Amdinette 20203, Amcoach 21125, and Amcoach 21822 derailed, with a total of about $5,000 to the three cars. A wheel of car 20203 reportedly mounted a frog at the spring mechanism, causing the derailment. Passengers from trains 391 and 392, the SHAWNEE, were bused around the accident, between Champaign and Carbondale and between Carbondale and Chicago respectively, while the equipment of train 391 was sent to the derailment scene to pick up the PANAMA's passengers. After the cars were rerailed, the PANAMA equipment was deadheaded to Chicago at 40mph.

SP AND SANTA FE PLAN A MERGER

A joint press release from Santa Fe and Southern Pacific dated May 15 announced: "The Boards of Directors of Santa Fe Industries, Inc. and Southern Pacific Company have agreed that Southern Pacific would be merged into Santa Fe Industries under the terms of a Memorandum of Intent which the two corporations have approved, it was announced today by John S. Reed, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Santa Fe, and B. F. Biaggini, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Southern Pacific. ...The combined corporation will be named Santa Fe Pacific Industries, Inc. and will be headquartered in Chicago." The merger plan, which must be approved by the ICC, came as a surprise to most people. The plan was stimulated by other rail mergers in the making, particularly the UP's pending purchase of WP. The merged railroad would have 25,000 miles of mainline, about 1000 less than the BN, the nation's largest-mileage railroad. The ICC has 31 months in which to act.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC commute line between San Francisco and San Jose CA will come under public control on July 1. An agreement with SP was signed May 7 by which the state DOT and the three counties involved will finance operation of the line for at least 10 years. SP will continue to operate the trains. Ratification of the agreement by the counties, the ICC and the state Public Utilities Commission was expected without problems. As of March, over 20,000 daily riders were using the trains, an increase of 30% from Mar 1979. The service is expected to require $10 million per year in subsidy. The number of daily trains will be increased from 44 to 52. Caltrans, which has management and financial responsibility for the line, will lease SP's equipment at first, later replacing or rebuilding it. SP agrees to 90% on-time performance and maintenance of the track at its current level. The SP line was the last U.S. commuter line operated without public subsidy. Santa Clara County planners hope to see the line extended south, and possibly west, and north to Alameda County via Niles.



MARTA train near state capitol building, at end of line. Ken Maylath photo.

ATLANTA'S MARTA SYSTEM has surprised observers by attracting many more riders than anticipated. Present ridership is about 50,000 daily, less than a year after the first line's opening on June 13, 1979. Even at the beginning, ridership was between 7 and 10,000 per day, two or three times higher than initial estimates. The opening of the second, west line last Dec 22 brought patronage up to its current high level.

HOUSTON'S METROPOLITAN TRANSIT Authority has been holding public meetings in May to outline plans for possible transit innovations, including a passenger rail line on the west side of the county.

PORTLAND, OREGON TRANSIT officials will decide sometime this summer whether it would be useful to buy the now-abandoned Portland Traction right of way between Milwaukie and Oregon City. The line, up for sale for close to $1 million, is owned jointly by SP and UP. Planners are interested in the line because it could provide a major portion of a possible light rail link between Portland and Oregon City.

BOSTON'S MBTA SYSTEM threatens to cut commuter rail service July 1 unless more funds are found to cover the system's increased costs.

CLEVELAND'S TERMINAL TOWER is seeing the addition of Greyhound, along with the Shaker Heights Rapid Transit lines and the Cleveland Transit rail line. Trailways is expected to follow soon. Observers hope Amtrak will decide to join the crowd.

ROCK ISLAND COMMUTER service in Chicago will continue to be operated by the CNW after May 31, even tho the CNW threatened to discontinued its operation after criticism by the RTA for the quality of service being provided.

RAIL CANADA

VIA RAIL CANADA announced on Apr 28 that it has filed with the CTC for an increase in fares effective June 1. An average 5% across-the-board increase is requested. A similar increase took place in Nov 1979. VIA said that the basis of 3-day and 7-30 day roundtrip excursion fares will remain unchanged, except that the minimum roundtrip excursion will be reduced from $8 to $6, in order to benefit a number of short-distance riders. Since VIA fares are rounded to whole dollars, it means that not all fares will actually increase with the 5% rise in the basic rate scale. Where the 5% increase is sufficient to bring the new rates above the 50¢ point between one dollar and the next, fares will increase, VIA said. During the months of Jun-Sep there will also be a 20% surcharge on sleeping car accommodations.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MAN Brian Heath of VIA in Montreal is now in a lengthy recovery period from injuries sustained in a recent automobile accident.

ONTARIO TASK FORCE on Provincial Rail Policy traveled to Lansing MI in early May for meetings with state officials. The group has earlier traveled to New York State for similar meetings. "We can see great advantages in the routing of the Chicago to New York State train thru Detroit and Buffalo gateways", said J. Scott Hercik, manager of Michigan Rail Passenger Operations. "We have had preliminary talks with VIA people, and cannot see any reason this route could not be feasible." Michigan is a prime market for Ontario tourism, the group said. Hercik noted, "Many of our people travel for hours by car to enjoy the Agawa Canyon and POLAR BEAR EXPRESS train excursions in Ontario. If we could get them out of their cars and on board public transportation for the total trip, we would not only save gas but we would help tourism in both countries."

VIA'S SYSTEM TIMETABLE effective Apr 27 has been published. It runs thru Sep 28, and it includes some schedules that take effect on Jun 8. The 4-color cover carries a closeup of narcissus and tulips, in reference to the Floralies 1980, international flower show in Montreal which opened May 17.

The timetable indicates that Halifax-Yarmouth railiner service will be reduced on Jun 8, with the elimination of trains 154-155. The one remaining train has its times changed. Until Jun 7, the two transcontinental trains run combined between Sudbury and Winnipeg. Starting Jun 8, they run separately across Canada. There are some relatively minor time changes with the transcons on Jun 8. The Jasper-Prince Rupert SKEENA runs eastbound 45mins earlier, leaving at 8:15am, effective Jun 9, and starting Jun 24 until Sep 11 this tri-weekly train will run daily.

ALBERTA DRIVERS WILL see a gasoline shortage and gas lines by winter, predicts a Calgary oil industry executive.

WEST VIA THE BROADWAY, EAST VIA THE LAKE SHORE

Comparing Amtrak's new HEP trains

by Ted Scull

After a pleasurable roundtrip to Chicago beginning on timetable change day, April 27, I am gratified to say that I can now recommend to the non-railfan travel market both the BROADWAY LIMITED and the LAKE SHORE LIMITED. The attractively refurbished HEP cars make the rest of Amtrak's equipment, apart from the Superliners, look like a rolling junkyard.

The Washington section of the BROADWAY LIMITED, train 441, had an almost magical appearance of something important as it stood waiting alongside an upper-level platform at Washington Union Station. Instead of clouds of steam emanating from beneath the coaches, a swirling mist enveloped the train. Approaching the train from the rear, I followed an unbroken line of equal-width red, white and blue stripes running from the rear sleeper forward to the two F-40 locomotives.

Amos Wright, the attendant, greeted me outside nameless sleeping car, line number 4140. He followed me to Roomette 4 and asked me if I knew how to operate the bed and the rest of the fixtures. He told me that the lounge car was forward and he pointed to the complimentary coffee and tea order card on the seat. His fine service would not end there, for during the night he would shine my scruffy moccasins.

I made a quick check of the lights, temperature controls and washing facilities to make sure that everything worked, and it did. The jaundice-yellow paint scheme would be my only criticism of an otherwise fine rebuilding job.

With the Washington and New York sections now combining at 30th Street Station instead of Harrisburg, beginning today, the two diesel engines originating in Washington would run thru to Chicago, with the New York section's electric engine coming off at Philadelphia.

Behind the motive power came the baggage and mail car, then one of the newly rebuilt ex-Army hospital cars as a cafeteria-lounge, three former Santa Fe coaches with the Indian motif panels still in place, the assigned sleeper, and a deadhead sleeper bringing up the rear.

The new cafeteria-lounge is worth describing as its function is two-fold. At one end of the car, passengers select their food and drink from refrigerated cabinets and then move forward to the counter where they may add to their choices, have the food heated, and pay the attendant. The range of items brought no surprises until I saw a teenage girl eating a round sausage pizza slice about the size of a saucer. Her indication that she was about to buy another was a good endorsement, so I tried one. For a frozen product, it is tasty if slightly limp and soggy, and the 60¢ price is about the same that one pays here in New York.

Mrs. L. Williams, one of the two attendants, said that she found the new setup to be more than satisfactory, and her only problem was making sure that passengers did not swipe food from the shelves when both attendants were absent from their posts. Apparently the lock on the overhead sliding door does not always work. She added that on the last trip east all the windows had been shot out on one side, resulting in an unpleasant and frightening experience.

Most of the car is taken up by seating of differing arrangements, with places for 49 passengers. Six dinette-type booths, three on a side, are meant for eating, with the rest of the seats in pairs and fours, facing and side-by-side in a variety of combinations. The fixed seats leave something to be desired, but I gather that fact of life is not a negotiable matter. This type of car was once used on the BROADWAY a few years back, and then it sported a piano. There are few windows at

the far end of the lounge, and in daylight hours this is a drawback. At night the lights are dimmed at the lounge end and kept brighter at the eating tables. I do wish that Amtrak would come up with something more permanent and attractive than the free-standing paper refuse bags in the lounges and coaches.

Crew morale seemed to be uniformly high, and everyone I encountered was pleasant and helpful to me and to the other passengers. Slumbercoach ticket holders posed the only problem. Many of them were confused by having to switch from coach to slumbercoach at Philadelphia rather than at Harrisburg, and the conductors were unsure how to tabulate their fares. Apparently, the reservations computer did not yet reflect this change, and there were no advance instructions how to handle this procedure. The Amtrak training technique is: when faced with a new situation, figure it out for yourself.

When we pulled into 30th Street Station 22 minutes late due to single track to the south and Northeast Corridor construction equipment, the coach attendants were uncertain when to move the transferring passengers. People began milling about, now knowing what to do.

The two locomotives and mail car were pulled off the front end and placed just beyond the platform in readiness for switching over to the head end of the New York section which had not yet arrived. At the forward end of the cafeteria-lounge, now the last car, I counted 14 Conrail and Amtrak men--and one assistant female foreman--working, supervising or looking on while the connection to the station's electric supply was hooked up. I was wondering if Philadelphia had lost the art of marshalling trains, as the entire maneuver, which was quite simple, lasted 46 minutes, with only 34 allowed in the timetable. But then it was the first day of school and no doubt they will relearn the skill.

The New York section arrived on the opposite side of the platform with its coach passengers seated backwards--a la the NATIONAL LIMITED--and its engine was removed from the front end which was actually the rear end. The Washington section's engines and baggage/mail car were added to the actual front end, ahead of the Chicago and Los Angeles mail cars. The six cars of the Washington section were pulled back by a diesel switcher and then placed at the rear of the New York section on the adjacent track.

The train at 5:16pm, or 34 minutes late, was now in place and ready to leave. With two diesels, three mail cars, a baggage-dorm, sleeper, slumbercoach, three coaches, diner, cafeteria-lounge, three coaches and two sleepers, the combined BROADWAY was at its full strength of 16 cars.

The climb to Paoli was slow enough to allow me to pick out all the familiar sights along the Main Line where I was raised. Beyond Paoli, the conductor and I had a short talk. He had "gotten his feet wet" as a conductor on the Paoli Local at the same time I was commuting to school from Bryn Mawr to Haverford. We figured that he probably had taken away my rubber bands and spitballs on more than one occasion.

The track from Paoli to Harrisburg is the worst stretch until after Lima, Ohio. I talked to people and listened to conversations in the lounge car. One man traveling to St. Louis was on his first train ride. He had more time than money, and he said, "Absolutely no way would I take the bus." Other people thought that the train was new, and some remarked how much room there was to move around. Old hands took it all in, enjoying the positive remarks of the newly-initiated.

The stop at Harrisburg is scheduled for five minutes now, with an engine change no longer necessary. However, they fueled the engines and we lost another 15mins.

After we crossed the Susquehanna, Mike Morrison, who had been with me at the NARP meeting in Washington, and I moved to the diner. The yin and yang symbols

etched in the glass partition indicated that the car had once belonged to the Northern Pacific. The car's appearance was most attractive. The lighting was perhaps on the bright side, and the colors were subdued for a change.

The head steward, Mr. G. C. Jones, had a most friendly and wasy manner. He was delighted with the car's rebuilding and he said it was a great improvement for his whole crew. He used the words "no comparison" when referring to the old kitchen versus the new electric kitchen. He would serve 90 passengers at dinner tonight.

The menu had four light entrees and four main entrees, including Broiled Scrod ($5.50), Roast Beef ($6.50), Roast Duck ($8.25) and a Sirloin Strip Steak ($8.95) including lettuce and tomato salad, baked potato and vegetable, rolls, and coffee or tea.

As it was near the end of the dinner hour, the roast beef was uniformly well-done, so I chose the strip steak, rare, which turned out to be a good choice even tho this cut is hardly the best. Mike found the scrod tasteless enough to have been almost any fish. With a film art teacher from Chicago's inner city schools we shared a half bottle of Great Western Champagne and another of Christian Brothers red (not chilled).

Our female table companion loved trains and knew a goodly amount about them. She said that her ex-boy friend was an avid train rider and even tho they had recently separated, she may have given him up but she had not given up liking trains. We had a most enjoyable 1½ hours talking and watching a KDKA-TV reporter and cameraman interview passengers and railroad employees in the diner. He had just made the inaugural eastbound run of the Pittsburgh-Philadelphia PENNSYLVANIAN.

Hopefully, the BROADWAY may soon give up some of its minor stops like Lewistown, Huntingdon and Greensburg which it collected after the demise of the NATIONAL LIMITED last October. It is interesting that the only time the train's communication system was used during the entire journey was when the Altoona division conductor announced that it was mandatory that all tickets be checked.

At what is called Altoona Temporary Station (secretly a permanent trailer), a sad drunk fell off the train, sprawling across the portable step. The conductor came running along to drag his feet from beneath the coach in case the train should slide backwards.

A helper was added for the climb up the Horseshoe Curve, with the departure from Altoona now 1 hour, 12 mins late. As we mounted the curve on the high side, I looked back to see the remains of a freight derailment on the low side of the curve up against the mountain. At Cresson we paused while the helper was taken off, and by now it was time for bed.

I was aware of standing in and then leaving Pittsburgh, but not cognizant of an engine breakdown until the next morning. One of the two F-40s had died just west of the Steel City, and by Lima, when I awoke for good, we were running 2 hours, 45 mins late with a blue Conrail freight engine on the head end. This unfortunate occurrance was exactly what I did not want to have happen. The BROADWAY was in recent months running to time almost every day, and with the new equipment, I hoped that I could write a story which forever banished the plagues of the past.

The rough road bed in Indiana affected my writing to the point where I had difficulty putting pen to paper. I am used to doing a lot of writing on trains, and this particular short, abrupt bouncing motion made the task next to impossible.

Breakfast was excellent, and I shared the table with a frequent and long-time BROADWAY rider traveling between Baltimore and Chicago. He was delighted to see the train much improved in every way.

After sausage, eggs and about six cups of coffee, I wandered into the slumbercoach to take down the floor plan. It was an 8-double 24-single ex-BN car, and somewhat different from the ex-NYC 10-double 16-single ex-roomette car.

Mr. R. W. Bach, the slumbecoach attendant, was extra board and not happy with the ventilation system in the car. He felt that the a/c system was too weak for a car which usually ran full (up to 40 passengers and sometimes more with small children sharing berths). Also, he said that the heating kicked on when the outside

(continued on page 18)

THE INAUGURAL RUN OF THE AEM-7

by Peter Bretz and Ken Maylath

Amtrak's new AEM-7 electric locomotive, built by General Motors after the Swedish ASEA design, had its inaugural revenue run on May 9, running from Washington Union Station as the 10am Metroliner. Unit 900 had been tested in the Northeast Corridor since it arrived this past January, and was now at the DOT's Pueblo, Colorado, test grounds for further trials. Today, unit 901 was to pull five Amfleet cars on the maiden run of the locomotive that will eventually replace the famous GG-1 in the Corridor.

At 9:30 at Track 13, ceremonies were beginning. The 901 was parked alongside, appropriately enough, engine 4901--a big GG-1 from which comparisons could be made. The GG-1 is twice the length and twice the weight of the AEM-7, but develops 5700 horsepower in contrast to the AEM-7's 7000 horses. The lightweight new loco at 201,500 pounds is lighter than any other Amtrak engine.

Photos by Peter Bretz

Inaugural ceremonies began with Amtrak VP-Public Affairs Carole Foryst serving as M.C. She introduced Tom Hackney, VP-Operations and Maintenance, who was standing in for Amtrak President Alan Boyd, who was recovering from minor surgery. Hackney pointed out that the engine has performed even better than expected--a point that was echoed by the manufacturer's representatives.

Lou Thompson, director of the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, stood in for Transportation Secretary Neil Goldschmidt (The Secretary was at Arlington National Cemetery, where a memorial service was underway for the men who died in the abortive rescue attempt in Iran). Thompson, too, was enthusiastic about the role of the AEM-7 in future Corridor operation. He pointed out that the new loco is 10% more energy-efficient than the E60 and 20% more so than the GG-1.

Congressman Robert Edgar of suburban Philadelphia got the honor of smashing the champagne bottle to christen the AEM-7. Edgar is head of the Northeast-Mid-

etched in the glass partition indicated that the car had once belonged to the Northern Pacific. The car's appearance was most attractive. The lighting was perhaps on the bright side, and the colors were subdued for a change.

The head steward, Mr. G. C. Jones, had a most friendly and wasy manner. He was delighted with the car's rebuilding and he said it was a great improvement for his whole crew. He used the words "no comparison" when referring to the old kitchen versus the new electric kitchen. He would serve 90 passengers at dinner tonight.

The menu had four light entrees and four main entrees, including Broiled Scrod ($5.50), Roast Beef ($6.50), Roast Duck ($8.25) and a Sirloin Strip Steak ($8.95) including lettuce and tomato salad, baked potato and vegetable, rolls, and coffee or tea.

As it was near the end of the dinner hour, the roast beef was uniformly well-done, so I chose the strip steak, rare, which turned out to be a good choice even tho this cut is hardly the best. Mike found the scrod tasteless enough to have been almost any fish. With a film art teacher from Chicago's inner city schools we shared a half bottle of Great Western Champagne and another of Christian Brothers red (not chilled).

Our female table companion loved trains and knew a goodly amount about them. She said that her ex-boy friend was an avid train rider and even tho they had recently separated, she may have given him up but she had not given up liking trains. We had a most enjoyable 1½ hours talking and watching a KDKA-TV reporter and cameraman interview passengers and railroad employees in the diner. He had just made the inaugural eastbound run of the Pittsburgh-Philadelphia PENNSYLVANIAN.

Hopefully, the BROADWAY may soon give up some of its minor stops like Lewistown, Huntingdon and Greensburg which it collected after the demise of the NATIONAL LIMITED last October. It is interesting that the only time the train's communication system was used during the entire journey was when the Altoona division conductor announced that it was mandatory that all tickets be checked.

At what is called Altoona Temporary Station (secretly a permanent trailer), a sad drunk fell off the train, sprawling across the portable step. The conductor came running along to drag his feet from beneath the coach in case the train should slide backwards.

A helper was added for the climb up the Horseshoe Curve, with the departure from Altoona now 1 hour, 12 mins late. As we mounted the curve on the high side, I looked back to see the remains of a freight derailment on the low side of the curve up against the mountain. At Cresson we paused while the helper was taken off, and by now it was time for bed.

I was aware of standing in and then leaving Pittsburgh, but not cognizant of an engine breakdown until the next morning. One of the two F-40s had died just west of the Steel City, and by Lima, when I awoke for good, we were running 2 hours, 45 mins late with a blue Conrail freight engine on the head end. This unfortunate occurrance was exactly what I did not want to have happen. The BROADWAY was in recent months running to time almost every day, and with the new equipment, I hoped that I could write a story which forever banished the plagues of the past.

The rough road bed in Indiana affected my writing to the point where I had difficulty putting pen to paper. I am used to doing a lot of writing on trains, and this particular short, abrupt bouncing motion made the task next to impossible.

Breakfast was excellent, and I shared the table with a frequent and long-time BROADWAY rider traveling between Baltimore and Chicago. He was delighted to see the train much improved in every way.

After sausage, eggs and about six cups of coffee, I wandered into the slumbercoach to take down the floor plan. It was an 8-double 24-single ex-BN car, and somewhat different from the ex-NYC 10-double 16-single ex-roomette car.

Mr. R. W. Bach, the slumbecoach attendant, was extra board and not happy with the ventilation system in the car. He felt that the a/c system was too weak for a car which usually ran full (up to 40 passengers and sometimes more with small children sharing berths). Also, he said that the heating kicked on when the outside

(continued on page 18)

THE INAUGURAL RUN OF THE AEM-7

by Peter Bretz and Ken Maylath

Amtrak's new AEM-7 electric locomotive, built by General Motors after the Swedish ASEA design, had its inaugural revenue run on May 9, running from Washington Union Station as the 10am Metroliner. Unit 900 had been tested in the Northeast Corridor since it arrived this past January, and was now at the DOT's Pueblo, Colorado, test grounds for further trials. Today, unit 901 was to pull five Amfleet cars on the maiden run of the locomotive that will eventually replace the famous GG-1 in the Corridor.

At 9:30 at Track 13, ceremonies were beginning. The 901 was parked alongside, appropriately enough, engine 4901--a big GG-1 from which comparisons could be made. The GG-1 is twice the length and twice the weight of the AEM-7, but devel-

Photos by Peter Bretz

ops 5700 horsepower in contrast to the AEM-7's 7000 horses. The lightweight new loco at 201,500 pounds is lighter than any other Amtrak engine.

Inaugural ceremonies began with Amtrak VP-Public Affairs Carole Foryst serving as M.C. She introduced Tom Hackney, VP-Operations and Maintenance, who was standing in for Amtrak President Alan Boyd, who was recovering from minor surgery. Hackney pointed out that the engine has performed even better than expected--a point that was echoed by the manufacturer's representatives.

Lou Thompson, director of the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, stood in for Transportation Secretary Neil Goldschmidt (The Secretary was at Arlington National Cemetery, where a memorial service was underway for the men who died in the abortive rescue attempt in Iran). Thompson, too, was enthusiastic about the role of the AEM-7 in future Corridor operation. He pointed out that the new loco is 10% more energy-efficient than the E60 and 20% more so than the GG-1.

Congressman Robert Edgar of suburban Philadelphia got the honor of smashing the champagne bottle to christen the AEM-7. Edgar is head of the Northeast-Mid-

west Congressional coalition, and is a big backer of the Corridor project. He swung the bottle, and the New York State champagne foamed and ran down the front and onto the pilot. Preliminaries were over, and it was time to board and let the 901 do its thing.

Behind the 901 were Amfleet cars 21084, 20002, 21078, 20000 and 21036. The first two cars were reserved for inaugural guests. As we settled down in our seats, we noticed a television monitor mounted on an overhead luggage rack. It showed the maze of tracks at the terminal throat, a view out the cab windshield. The monitor, and another like it in the Amcafe car, were Sony Trinitrons, but the Motorola camera in the cab was a black-and-white job. It adjusted automatically for varying light levels, useful particularly in tunnels, or when one of the officials in the cab occasionally stood in front of the camera. Incidentally, there was apparently no TV coverage of the event, tho a number of newsmen were aboard.

As we streaked along, the announcement was made that a complimentary breakfast was available. This consisted of coffee, juice, croissant and roll. At Baltimore, Ken departed and Pete continued the journey, his eyes glued on the TV screen. The picture quality was variable, due, it was said, to electrical interference. It was interesting to observe approaching trains on the monitor--at first we'd see a white blob of a headlight, growing larger. Then, it would focus down to an engine. As the train passed on the screen, we would look out the window and see the train pass again, this time in living color.

As we neared Philadelphia, it was announced that lunch was offered. We had a nice ham-and-cheese sandwich plus wine. Meanwhile, various interview were going on with Amtrak reps and people from General Motors EMD division and from Sweden. Sue Stevens of Amtrak Public Affairs did a fine job of coordinating things. We noted that on a copy of the car report that one of the brakemen was A. M. Land--or Am-land; very appropriate here in Amtrak's home country.

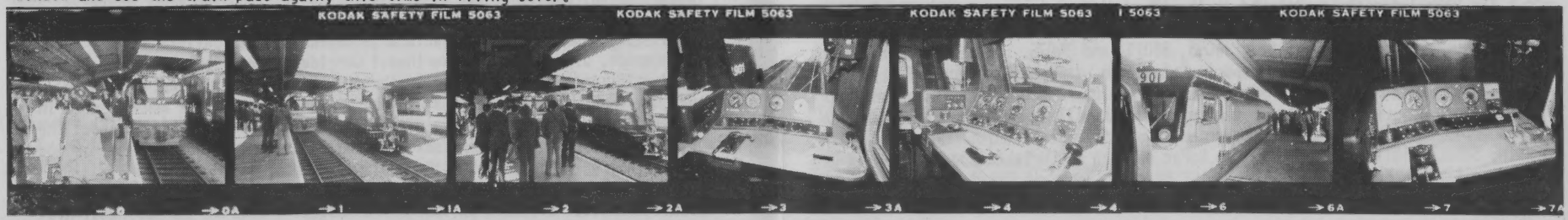
At Newark we were able to board the engine and ride in the cab. At the controls was H. Gunther, along with fireman R. C. Liberto. The cab had lots of noise inside from the train radio and people talking, along with the whine of the engine --altho it is relatively quiet both inside and out. That's a lot different from an F-40 blast-box.

I sat in the fireman's chair and looked across a large desk-like area to the big front picture window. There is no grille-work, as the windshield is Triplex Type Y glass, called one of the strongest now available. The engineer's controls were similar to those of a Turboliner, and even the "dead-man" controls featured the siren sound like the Turbos.

Due to a train ahead of us, we ambled along at a mere 35-40mph for a couple of miles. Then, after some clear signals, we picked up speed. I timed our rate of acceleration from 45 to 79mph as 40 seconds! We really did get a feeling of being pinned back in our seat. I, for one, am highly impressed with the performance and appearance of this "Mighty Mouse" or "Swedish Meatball" or whatever this locomotive will be known as. It was thrilling to plunge into the Hudson River Tunnel and glide into Manhattan--the first time I'd done it from a cab. At Penn Station, where we arrived five minutes early, we said goodbye and thanks to Amtrak for this splendid run.

Twenty minutes later, I was on a Conrail local to Trenton, where I changed to another Conrail "Jersey Arrow"-equipped train to Philadelphia, arriving there at half the price Amtrak would have charged ($6.20 as opposed to $12). At this point there was no choice but Amtrak, so I got a Metroliner ticket and hopped on train 119 from New York. I was surprised to find it had the same set of equipment I had come up on, still powered by the 901.

The first two cars still had the TV monitors, so I enjoyed watching the track ahead all the way to Baltimore, where we arrived 12 minutes early. This time,



since the press was not aboard, the cars were open to any passenger who wanted to come forward and look at the TV monitor, and many did. This was anncunced on the P.A., as was also the fact that we were privileged to have "the locomotive of the future."

Mixed Train of Thoughts

A TRANSPORTATION HORROR of the year occurred May 9 when a freighter in a blinding storm struck the Sunshine Skyway Bridge over Tampa Bay in Florida, knocking out 1300 feet of southbound bridge lanes and causing several vehicles to fall 140 feet into the bay. There were 35 deaths in the accident, including 26 people aboard a Greyhound bus that was traveling from Chicago, on the route of the Amtrak FLORIDIAN that was discontinued last October.....

MOUNT ST. HELENS in Washington State finally erupted with a violent explosion at about 9am on May 18, spreading fine, destructive volcanic ash eastward on the prevailing winds, and mud and debris on the ground. The BN line used by the COAST STARLIGHT is about 34 miles west of the volcano, as is Interstate 5. Highways and rail lines in the area were closed after the eruption, and the northbound STARLIGHT was terminated at Portland. The southbound train did not leave Seattle. The westbound EMPIRE BUILDER was halted at Minot ND, and the eastbound train from Seattle was cancelled on May 19, and not run again until May 22. The PIONEER was turned at La Grande OR, running no closer to Portland, and Seattle-Portland service was terminated. The COAST STARLIGHT resumed operation out of Seattle on May 20. No alternate transportation was provided for most cancelled trains, as there was no alternate transportation available in most cases. Airline flights across the nation were diverted around the volcanic cloud that moved eastward over the U.S. The volcanic ash was so fine and destructive to engines that transportation in its path, and in fact most normal commerce, came to a halt. Most of the BN was shut down by the morning of May 19. Interstate 90 was closed from North Bend WA to the Idaho-Montana border. Amtrak stations that were most heavily hit by volcanic ash were Yakima and Ellensburg WA, but even further east, especially in Montana, places such as Missoula suffered greatly. (An ad in this issue from a Missoula advertiser was placed just before the volcano erupted.) A mud dam on the Toutle River near the mountain was formed, and still threatens possible collapse, which would sever the COAST STARLIGHT line and Interstate 5. Authorities are watching it closely. The eruption caused an estimated $1.5 billion in physical damages, and about 30 people are believed to have lost their lives.....

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THE PANAMA LIMITED on May 5 arrived New Orleans as a Superliner train, with 5 new cars in service. It picked up the three Superliners that were in the New Orleans open house exhibit (see p. 4) and took them north on the same day as no. 58. Two days later the northbound train with a different consist derailed in Illinois (see p. 5). Cars in the consist of the northbound Superliner PANAMA were 34069, 34002, 34085, 34061, 34029, 34098, 38011, and 34076. There was no baggage car nor sleeper. Incidentally, reports Pete Roehm, the private car Lehigh Valley 353 that was damaged in that PANAMA derailment on May 7 had its entire undercarriage ripped off, but no interior damage. The car will be repaired at Amtrak's Beech Grove shops, and might be converted to electric power.....

THE SUNSET LIMITED detoured on the MoPac between New Orleans and Beaumont TX from Apr 27 thru May 2.....

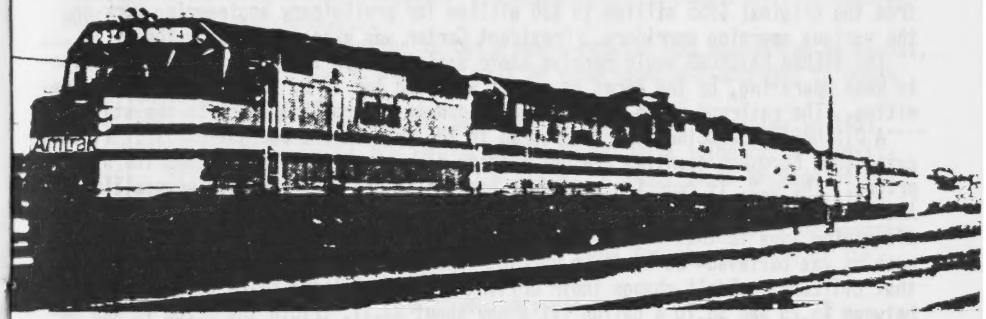
A FREIGHT DERAILMENT of 17 cars on the SP's Cantara Loop between Mott and Small CA at 1:05pm on May 6 caused the southbound COAST STARLIGHT to detour on the BN between Klamath Falls and Bieber and then on the WP to Sacramento. The northbound train took the same detour in reverse.....

THE BROADWAY LIMITED is now reportedly considered a "show case" Amtrak train, and will get its own boarding area in Chicago's Union Station. Besides the pizza in the lounge, reported in Ted Scull's article in this issue, the lounge sells barbecue spareribs and chili dogs. It is rumored that in 1982 the Washington section of the BROADWAY will run on the B&O from Pittsburgh.....

HEAD-END POWER PROGRAM of Amtrak's will reportedly see the CRESCENT the next train to get the rebuilt conventional cars, followed by the SILVER STAR, while the next generation of Amfleet cars will go on the SILVER METEOR first, then other Florida trains, and then the CRESCENT.....

THE BUDD SPV-2000 railcars being built for Amtrak and the Connecticut DOT had their inaugural run on the Shore Line Route on May 15 and were placed in revenue service on the 16th (see also page 18). A revised delivery schedule of the cars is: #995 due May 13, 994 due May 20, 993 due May 27, 992 and 999 due Jun 3, 990 due Jun 17, 989 Jun 24, and 988 Jun 26.....

VIA RAIL CANADA was ordered as of Apr 17 to implement within 60 days the following regarding the Noranda-Senneterre service: Until arrangements are made for a connecting bus between Senneterre and Val d'Or as well as appropriate regular scheduled bus service between Val d'Or and Noranda with ongoing connections and to be included in the VIA timetable as part of or adjacent to the Montreal-Ste Foy-Senneterre-Cochrane-Val d'Or service, it must continue to run the trains between those two points. After the foregoing has been implemented, the rail service may be suspended indefinitely.....



THE FOUR LOCOMOTIVES on the COAST STARLIGHT in the above photo display all of the color schemes used at various times on diesels built for Amtrak, with the newest to the oldest running from front to rear. The two leading engines are F40s, while the rearmost two are SDPs. Engine numbers are 294, 254, 538, and 635. Gene Hines found them on the southbound train on Mar 17 at San Jose.....

CONGRESSMAN HARLEY STAGGERS is due to retire in 1981, and scuttlebutt has it that the SHENANDOAH will be dropped after that. Staggers has been a diligent Amtrak supporter, and a strong supporter of rail service for his home state of West Virginia.....

THE LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION of RR Passengers had a Saturday meeting in conjunction with the Amtrak New Orleans open house the first weekend of May. Al Edelston, Director of State and Local Services spoke to LARP. The passenger group had a booth set up on the concourse of the station and passed out 600 survey forms to visitors.....

BOSTON'S MBTA PLANS to scrap 16 ex-NH 2200-series coaches of 1937 vintage and four Shoreliners plus several PCC streetcars.....

THE RIO GRANDE is legally free at the end of May to post 30-day discontinuance notices for its train or the western leg thereof, with the statutory year of continuation required by the ICC having ended. The ICC could extend the continuation requirement, of course. Business is said to be improved on the western leg of the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR line with the Amtrak connections now available. It is reported that the DRGW has purchased a dining car from UP for the train.....

SANTA FE FREIGHT accident in the Mojave Desert 40 miles east of Barstow CA just after midnight May 12 resulted in the death of a conductor as one freight struck the rear of another that was stopped, both trains headed westward. The two SOUTHWEST LIMITED trains were halted, the westbound train at Needles and the eastbound one at Barstow, and passengers were bused between and the consists turned.....

KENTUCKY RAILWAY MUSEUM ran a chartered train for Louisville radio station WLRS from Louisville to Kings Island amusement park near Cincinnati on Apr 11. The train was a sellout with over 600 passengers. Consist of the train, recorded at Anchorage KY on Apr 11, was engine L&N 2749, heater car USAX 89636, cars Atk 2811 "Pearl River", Sou 1209, CRR 103, CRR 101, Milw 606, CRR 105, L&N 1488 (baggage), KRM 10202 (diner), CRR 108, Milw 484, CRR 109, Sou 1016, and KRM 100 "Mt. Broderick". Train was back to Louisville early on Apr 12.....

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THE "EMERGING CORRIDORS" legislation has finally been passed by Congress (May 22), and of course it is part of the bill to complete renovation of the NE Corridor and to bail out the bankrupt Rock Island. The bill gives $750 million for finishing the Corridor rebuilding. It authorizes $75 million for financial assistance to employees of the Rock Island who were laid off in the bankruptcy and $40 million for other assistance related to the bankruptcy, including loans for buying and rehabilitating parts of the Rock Island. The Emerging Corridors section of the bill was pared down from the original $955 million to $38 million for preliminary engineering work on the various emerging corridors. President Carter was expected to sign the bill.....

THE SIERRA RAILROAD would receive state assistance in the amount of $1.5 million to keep operating, by the terms of a bill approved Apr 30 by the Assembly Parks Committee. The railroad would be required to donate its rolling stock to the state.....

A DISTURBING GASOLINE report appeared in the Wall Street Journal May 12. It indicates that European counties are not cutting down on gas consumption despite high prices. The U.S. is reducing gas usage because it has more room for economizing--American fuel efficiency wasn't as high as European efficiency to begin with. The disturbing idea is that high prices for fuel won't deter people from driving as much as was believed--at least in Europe. The paper said that a poll in France found that citizens wouldn't change their driving habits until the price of gas reached between $5.25 and $8.70 a gallon (it's now about $3.17, triple the price it was before the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo).....

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CITIZENS FOR RAIL CALIFORNIA second annual statewide conference was held Apr 11-13 in Sacramento. Congressmen Robert Matsui and Vic Fazio addressed the group. Matsui said "Time is running out for America's wasteful energy practices and the cult of the private automobile. It is imperative that we incorporate energy-efficient modes into our transportation network--modes such as trains, which do not deplete our limited supply of fossil fuels". CRC's Ed Osburn unveiled the draft version of the consumer group's own 3-year and long-term plan entitled "Toward a Rail Calfironia". The 20-page document addresses both conceptual goals and specific service recommendations, and is an update of CRC's initial 1977 plan. It will be available in final form at $3 per copy from CRC, Box 99782, San Diego 92109.....

MOUNT ST. HELENS erupted a second time, a smaller eruption, on May 25, as we were closing out our news for this issue. It was reported that the Portland OR airport closed, but we have no word yet on the possible effect on train service.....

THE WHITE PASS & Yukon Railway between Skagway, Alaska and Whitehorse, Yukon Territories, is in financial difficulties. A recent CTC report has concluded that the line should receive financial assistance in the public interest, but it proposed that the U.S. and the Yukon be the first to put up money. The Yukon would like to see the line extended in order to permit opening of more mines in the interior, and it notes that abandonment of the railway would entail high costs in upgrading the parallel highway. This report comes from the Upper Canada Railway Society.....

THE "PRINCESS MARGUERITE" is not running on its usual route between Seattle and Victoria this year, and in its place is a smaller vessel, the "Queen of Prince Rupert" renamed the "Victoria Princess" and a Boeing hydrofoil. Supporters of the "Marguerite" are up in arms over the use of these two unsatisfactory vessels, especially the hydrofoil. The Greenpeace group on May 18 held a demonstration in Seattle opposing the hydrofoil because it threatens whales. Manufacturer Boeing, of Seattle, is apparently embarassed that it has sold only about 15 of the hydrofoils, and observers are wondering whether the company put unfair pressures on the British Columbia government to use the Boeing-built vessel and eliminate the "Marguerite" over the protests of many groups.....

NEW YORK STATE rail officials told the NY Times that the state doesn't want to discontinue the ADIRONDACK, it only wants to stop paying its $3 million annual subsidy and have Amtrak run it on its own. Amtrak said it has neither the money nor the authority to do so. An impasse seems to have been reached. The present contract to subsidize the train runs out after Jun 30.....

THE PROPOSED MERGER of SP and Santa Fe inspired a San Francisco Chronicle political cartoonist to draw a 16-legged octopus representing the merged roads.....

THE ALBANY, OREGON Amtrak station became a manned station on Apr 27, selling tickets and handling checked baggage. Package express shipments will be handled beginning at a later date.....

LAKE SHORE LIMITED is expected to get a newly-rebuilt HEP lounge car by August...

HELL GATE BRIDGE in the NE Corridor will be resurfaced and upgraded to 60mph operation this summer.....

THE EMPIRE BUILDER is expected to begin daily year-round operation in 1981.....

LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI are taking action to set up a joing rapid transit compact. With legislation approved by the states, a study would be made of the feasibility of a rapid transit commuter line for the Gulf Coast. Any adjacent states that wanted to join the compact would be welcomed. The Louisiana Association of RR Passengers has passed a resolution to push for an expansion of the Office of Public Transit in the Louisiana DOT.....

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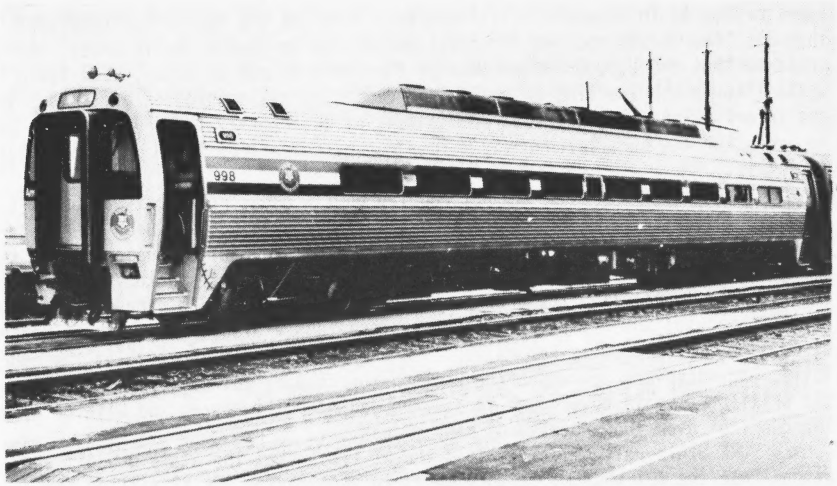
A NEBRASKA WOMAN died of a fall under the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR when she was alighting from the train at Oakland on May 11.....

A GERMAN TRUCK was spotted on Amcafe 21004 while it was in the consist of the BROADWAY LIMITED, train 440, in Washington on May 1. The truck was gray in color, clearly different from the standard Amfleet truck.....

CHICAGO-INDIANAPOLIS TRAIN preparations are underway. Work began "in earnest" on Apr 1 on the L&N (Monon) line north of Crawfordsville IN. Conrail has closed Ames Tower in Crawfordsville, at the junction of Conrail and L&N lines where the proposed passenger train will change from one railroad to the other. The train is expected to begin operation on Oct 1, 1980.....

THE SANTA FE accident near Barstow described on page 16 resulted in a Chicago arrival of train 4 11hrs, 33mins late. The wreck occurred at Pisgah CA.....

TEN MILLION PASSENGERS per year will be served by Washington's Union Station by 1990, Amtrak expects. Accordingly, it announced on May 14 that it will sponsor a special panel of the Urban Land Institute to study the commercial development potential at the station. The ULI panel will issue a report of its findings on Jun 27.....



Budd-built SPV-2000 rail disel cars were being given test runs on the Shore Line route this month. Cars 998, 997 and 996 stopped over in New London CT, where Alan Crossley photographed car 998 (above). Note that the cars carry the regular Amtrak markings, with the addition of the blue Connecticut state seal on the end and in the center of the Amtrak stripes. End panels of the new cars are silver-gray with black trim. After some light repairs at New London, the set of cars continued eastward, probably to Providence, and returned westward in the evening, with car 996 leading. The date was May 7, with the photo taken at noon.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"If our trains worked as well as our airlines, the airlines would be out of business. For the most part, airline employees act as though they care about having your business."

--Columnist Andy Rooney in Miami Herald, c. Apr 11.

BROADWAY & LAKE SHORE COMPARED

(continued from page 10)

temperature was 64 degrees when he thought 50 was a better number. He was working hard and perspiring to prove his point.

The lightly-loaded BROADWAY finally pulled into Union Station Chicago percisely at noon, 2 hours, 55 mins late, and not breaking my record of the last ten years and a dozen trips--being over one hour late on every trip. It should be noted that the BROADWAY has difficulty making up time as it does not have the padding of the LAKE SHORE's schedule.

With another NARP director, Brian Cutter from Minneapolis, who had come in yesterday after a very poor CARDINAL ride, we walked thru the Windy City's rain-swept streets to Northwestern Station to have a look and lunch. This grand landmark must be preserved and restored, eliminating some of the cheap and tacky concession shops.

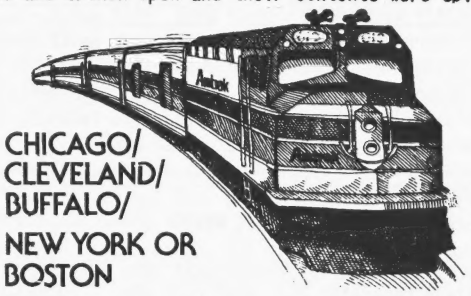
With the rain letting up, I photographed some trains from the overhead vantage point at the new coach yard facility under construction, and I was delighted to see how favorably the BROADWAY and the LAKE SHORE came out when compared to the shabby ZEPHYR and the tacky PANAMA passing beneath the bridge. However, I hope their day will come too, and soon.

The return to New York began at 3:30pm when I boarded the LAKE SHORE with a relatively small crowd of passengers on this Monday afternoon. The consist is quite similar, and it is a split operation like the BROADWAY. Behind the two F-40 locomotives were a baggage-dorm, slumbercoach (ex-NYC), sleeper, diner, Amdinette/coach as the lounge, and three coaches making the New York section, and two coaches, a sleeper and baggage/mail making the Boston portion.

The Amdinette is superior to the Amcafe which has until recently equipped the LAKE SHORE, yet it hardly holds a candle to the cafeteria-lounge in terms of friendly lounge-style configuration or in seating capacity. There was a shabby feeling about it, the windows were scratched and the doors at both ends were inoperable. However, a lounge of any sort attracts passengers who are looking for conversation and a good time, and shortly, the layout arrangements made very little difference unless that was one's only interest. Passengers were playing cards with a round deck, wearing red, white and blue Amtrak paper hats and generally having a fine time.

The track, all the way to Poughkeepsie in fact, is almost uniformly excellent, and the train runs fast and continuously between most stops. Twenty minutes have been cut from the schedule, and no doubt more could be trimmed even now.

Beyond La Porte, Indiana, the fresh remains of a major derailment involving two Conrail freights was frighteningly visible on both sides of the double track. I understand that a crane from one freight swung out of line on a curve and collided with the lead engine on the oncoming train, causing several deaths. Freight cars were twisted and broken open and their contents were spilling out.



In the diner, Thomas Livolsi, the head steward, assured me that the roast beef was rare, and I received three generous slices of decent enough meat and all the trimmings. Joseph Bonner, the waiter at dinner and breakfast, made every effort to please. As a nice touch, he wrapped the half bottle of Almaden red (which was not chilled) in a linen napkin and put it on its side against the window sill --yes, with the cork in! Mr. Livolsi testified to the superiority of the electric kitchen and the refurbishing job. This diner had come off the LONE STAR as had he--a sad tale for Oklahomans.

After Toledo and a talk on the platform with a 70-year-old energetic English traveler who had come around the world across the Soviet Union and China by train and across the Pacific by freighter, I retired for the night. It is my pleasure to be able to say once again that on "The Water Level Route - You Can Sleep," even under the light of a full moon. I was aware of nothing until after Syracuse and 40 minutes out of Utica. As far as I am aware, we had never stopped all night.

We were on time at Utica and ten minutes early into Rensselaer, where the train was swiftly broken apart into two sections. The Boston-bound section had an Amdinette added to its consist, the only change.

Mr. Livolsi said that he had to refuse passengers for breakfast within 15mins of Rensselaer because of the no-power period during the stopover. At breakfast, I talked with an economist who worked for a trucking company, who had decided on the spur of the moment to ride the train to and from her suburban Chicago meeting. Her girl friend had liked the MONTREALER and had told her not to bother with a sleeper

because it was too bumpy to make the extra expense worthwhile. I told her about my night on the water level route.

We left Rensselaer as the NIAGARA RAINBOW and its four Amfleet cars pulled in from New York. We deposited one person at Hudson, skipped Rhinecliff altogether, and arrived at Poughkeepsie ten minutes early. Croton-Harmon and the engine transfer might have been equally in advance of time had we not sat for 15mins north of Croton North. Arrival at Grand Central came five minutes early at 1:15pm and I left the train feeling all was well with the two East Coast to Chicago trains. It would be a hard decision to make in the future now that one had the choice of two fine trains.

I helped the round-the-world English lady up the stairs and into a taxi on Vanderbilt Avenue. As I closed the door, she announced to the driver that she wanted to go to the Edison Hotel which she knew to be just around the corner, so she did not want to be driven all over the city to get there! For a change of pace I returned home on the Lexington Avenue IRT number 5.

(Ed. note: For consists of Mr. Scull's trains, see Cars & Consists, below.)

CARS & CONSISTS

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41/441, Philadelphia Apr 27: engines 328, 324 (F40s) (add Conrail 8223 west of Pittsburgh); cars 1154 mail/bag to Chicago, 1158 mail to Chicago, 1216 mail to L.A., 1613 bag-dorm, 2920 "Pacific Mist" slpr, 2080 slumbercoach, coaches 4711, 4715, 4712, diner 8506, 3101 cafeteria-lounge, coaches 4709, 4703, 4700, slprs 2892, 2696. Engine 956 used on NY section.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 48, Chicago Apr 28: engines 301, 277 (F40s); cars 1610 bag-dorm, 2050 slumbercoach, 2889 slpr, 8503 diner, Amdinette/coach 20208, coaches 4624, 4616, 4611, 4613, 4620, slpr 2917 "Pacific Island", 1365 mail to Boston; Amdinette added at Albany/Rensselaer, number unknown.

*ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 347, Berwyn IL May 13: engine 297 (F40); cars Superliner coaches 34013, 34033, 34028.

*BLACK HAWK, train 371, Berwyn IL May 13: engine 261 (F40); cars 21192 Amcoach, 20045 Amcafe.

*RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR, D&RGW train 17, Denver-Salt Lake City May 3: engines 5771 (F9), 5763 (B), steam generator 253, 5762 (B); cars 1230 bag-coach combo, coaches 1121, 1120, dome coaches 1108 "Silver Pony", 1106 "Silver Colt", 1105 "Silver Bronco", diner 1115 "Silver Banquet", dome observation 1145 "Silver Sky".

*NORTH STAR, train 10, St. Paul May 7: engine 243 (F40); cars 1256 bag, slpr 2924 "Pacific Patrol", Amdinette 20222, Amcoaches 21816, 21102, 21206.

*PIONEER, train 26, Ogden May 13: engine 215 (F40); cars 21842, 21841, 20230, 2993 "Pine Gorge", 1271 bag.

*DESERT WIND, train 36, Ogden May 13: engine UP 448; cars 21827, 20232 Amdinette, 21821, 1259 bag.

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, Eugene Apr 11: engines 642, 635 (SDPs); cars 1114, 1552, 5681, 4491, 4404, dome 9474, 8334, 4844, 4530, 4509, 4532, dome 9362 "Mountain View", 8042, 2663 "Silver Slope", 2661 "Silver Plain", deadhds 1222, 5646.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3, Kansas City Apr 24: engines 527, 526, 519 (SDPs), 900 (AEM-7 electric off at La Junta for Pueblo), 671 (SDP off at La Junta); cars 1240, 1255, 9992, 9928, 9964, 9973, 9984, 9927, 2200 "Silver Dove", 2607 "Pacific Cove", 2610 "Pacific Falls".

*Amtrak ferry run Chicago-Beech Grove Shops, at Crawfordsville IN Apr 22: engines 243, 265 (F40s); cars baggage 1105, 1102, slprs 2626 "Pacific Plateau", 2681, 2691, baggage 1101, 1107, Conrail caboose 23221. Same, westbd Apr 23: engine 243; cars slpr 2086, coach 4723, bag 1088, coaches 4722, 4721, Conrail caboose 23221.

*INTER-AMERICAN, train 22, Chicago Apr 22: engines 245, 267, 264 (F40s); cars 1244, 2891, 20233, 21873, 21824, 20048, 21869, 21146.

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Jun 3: San Francisco Muni excursion with streetcar no. 1, from and to Geneva Car House 6:30-10:30pm. $16; $13.80 for paid-up Association members (who are given preference). Bay Area Elec. RR Ass'n, Box 3694, San Francisco CA 94119. 673-6547

Jun 7: "Tijuana Trolley II" bus tour of construction progress on San Diego's new light rail transit line. Meets Amtrak #770, returns in time for #779. $5.00. SSAE to Elec. Rwy Hist. Ass'n of So. Cal., Box 24315, Los Angeles CA 90024.

Jul 12 & 13: Mile High Railfair, Denver. "America's premier RR show", railroadiana, models, layouts, authors, artists, movies, etc., incl RGZ ticket prizes. #10 SSAE & 30¢ post. for details: NRHS, Box 5181 TA, Denver CO 80217 Dept. RTN.

Jul 4-6: Electric Railroaders' Ass'n Convention, San Francisco, at Sheraton-Palace Hotel. Optional Muni trip & BART tour. $45 incl all except hotel space. ERA, Inc., 89 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017.

Jul 21-27: Alexandria VA-Toronto to NRHS national convention; steam part of trip. Complete dining, lounge & sleeping facilities, roundend obs. Dates tentative. Info: Roanoke NRHS, Carl Jensen, Box 13222, Roanoke VA 24032.

Jul 20-30: New Orleans-Toronto NRHS convention in private slprs "Imperial Emblem" & "Bluebonnet". Approx. $600; $100 deposit. Up via Chicago-Detroit, back Montreal-NY. NONRHS, Box 4355, New Orleans LA 70178. (504) 835-6021.

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INSTRUCTIONS: Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K) listed below: (A) Your overall impression of the train, taking everything into account; (B) Service from operating crew (conductor, etc.); (C) Dining or snack crew service; (D) Lounge crew service; (E) Food quality; (F) Car mechanical condition; (G) Car cleanliness and housekeeping; (H) Condition of track & roadbed; (I) Desirability of train's schedule; (J) Condition of stations: (K) Appropriateness of type of equipment used.

Use the 9-point rating scale below. Do not use previous rating forms, as we have changed some of the categories. Put ratings on separate sheet from other correspondence.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9

▲ Extremely poor — ▲ Average, acceptable — ▲ Extremely good

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													①
													②
													③
													④
													⑤
													⑥

*COMMENTS: To add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

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